

WORK-READY THINK TANK

SUMMARY REPORT

FALL 2021









Event Details

Date: September 23, 2021

Location: Palmer River Grille, 382 Market Street, Warren, RI

02885

Overview: In partnership with the East Bay Chamber of Commerce Education Sub-Committee, Bristol-Warren Regional School District, Town of Bristol, and Highlander School, this networking series was started to help bridge the gap between local business needs and student learning objectives to provide students with more meaningful real-world learning opportunities that support the local economy.

Event Results

Number of Attendees: 40

Number of Feedback Responses: 267

Event Press: Think tank seeks bridge between high school

and professional world | East Bay Media Group

Key Takeaways

- 1) Develop a work-based learning (WBL) program structure.
- 2) Develop work-based learning program expectations and guidelines for students and businesses.
- 3) Develop a communications plan that informs and engages businesses with the district's work-based learning program.
- 4) Research and recommend compensation types for businesses to offer students that participate in the workbased learning program.
- 5) Host more events like the Think Tank that engage the business community.

89%

OF PARTICIPANTS INTERESTED IN ATTENDING FUTURE THINK TANK EVENTS

Feedback

Feedback is summarized based on the Question Clusters used for the breakout discussions at the Think Tank event.

Cluster #1: Expectations of Schools

- What do you need and expect from the school in order to create a successful internship?
- What systems and support do you think the school needs to have in place in order for an internship to be successful?
- What systems and support do you think a business needs to have in place in order for an internship to be seamless?
- What do you hope to get out of the relationship with our school?

Cluster #1 Feedback

Create Incentives

- Require students complete a work-based learning assignment to graduate.
- Develop a work-readiness course.
- Encourage businesses to provide interns the opportunity to go full-time after graduation.
- Create an internship/community job board.

Manage Coordinated Planning

- Communicate regularly with employers.
- Assign a designated point of contact to employers.
- Provide lead times to businesses.
- Provide informational sessions for businesses.
 - Time commitment information.
 - Health and safety expectations/guidelines.
- Provide panel presentation opportunities.

Manage Logistics

- Establish transportation guidelines for students to get to work-based learning opportunities.
- Schedule work-based learning hours to meet employer's needs.
- Assign a designated point of contact to students.

Manage Student Expectations

- Host field trips and tours of local businesses.
- Host Q&A session(s) to allow students to ask questions to employers.
- Create opportunities that allow students to network in their field of interest.
- Establish an program template which includes expectations/guidelines for students and businesses.

Mentor Training

Assign a mentor to students at the business.

Release Time

- Provide flexibility to students to allow them to attend internships/work assignments during the school day.
- Provide businesses with the time students are available during the school day to work.

Skill Building

- Develop a business orientation program to educate employers on hosting students.
- Provide students an opportunity to explore multiple career opportunities.

Cluster #2: Workforce Readiness Skills

- What do you expect a top candidate to have to be successful in your workplace?
- What are the soft skills or experiences that are essential to running your business that all employees must have?
- What are the hard skills or experiences that are essential to running your business that all employees must have?
- What skills do the students needs to be successful as an intern at your business?

Cluster #2 Feedback

Certified Skills

- Provide on-the-job certification opportunities.
- Conduct performance reviews of interns.

Group Skills

- Engaged
- Team-Player
- Brainstorming
- Confidentiality
- Social Awareness

Presentation Skills

- Interview
- Business Presentations
- Dress Code Etiquette
- Verbal and Non-Verbal Communication

Soft Skills

- Work Ethic
- Initiative
- Self-Confidence
- Curiosity
- Empathy
- Punctuality
- Accountability
- Passion to Learn
- Time Management
- Flexible
- Resilient
- Self-Motivated

• Strategic Skills

- Knowledge of the background of the company.
- Clear understanding of expectations and benchmarks.
- Understanding of the company culture.
- Knowledge of where to find answers/resources.

• Technical Skills (Cont.)

- Digital Literacy
- Microsoft Office
- Video Communication (Zoom, Teams, etc.)
- Analytics (Google Analytics, etc.)
- Coding (HTML, CSS, JavaScript)
- CAD Design

Cluster #3: Training, Certifications, and Network

- Does your workplace require any special certifications/training for entry-level positions? If so, what are they?
- Please suggest any industry networks we should belong to/you can help us network with in order to help our students gain access to your industry.
- Is there anything you can share regarding training, certifications, and networking for your industry that you perceive would be helpful for us to know?

Cluster #2 Feedback

Certifications

- OSHA 10
- ServSafe
- Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) Certificate
- QuickBooks

Engaging

- RI Small Business Development Center
- RI Innovation Hub

Inclusion

 Create an entrepreneur program though the East Bay Chamber of Commerce which allow students to work with businesses.

Inclusion (Cont.)

- Open all boards (Public, Private, Corporate,
 Philanthropic) to an observer seat for a student.
- Allow students to participate in the East Bay
 Chamber of Commerce's sub-committees so they
 can develop an understanding of how boards work.

Network

- Industry Associations
 - Rhode Island Marine Trades Association (RIMTA)
 - Rhode Island Hospitality Association
 - League of Cities and Towns
- Professional Credential Associations
 - Project Management Institute
 - Rhode Island Society of CPAs
 - American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME)
 - Society Auto Engineers (SAE)
- Networking Associations
 - East Bay Chamber of Commerce
 - Rotary Club

Training

- Strength-Finder (i.e. Kolbe Right Fit, etc.)
- Online Classes (LinkedIn Learning, edX, etc.)

• Training (Cont.)

- Teach students financial literacy as part of the required curriculum.
- Teach/train educators on the current/most used industry software.
- Teach educators on industry programs and equipment that should be used in the classroom.
- Establish a mentorship program that connects students with professionals in their future career field.
- Develop video trainings and tutorials for educators.

Cluster #4: Free Response

- What information do you want to share today that will be helpful to a school/business partnership?
- What questions do you have?

Cluster #2 Feedback

Expectations

- Teach students on workplace etiquettes.
- Teach students about the importance of commitment prior to participating in a WBL program.
- Engage and partner with businesses.
- Develop an understanding of the business and the industry.
- Not every student needs to go to college to be successful.

Exploration

- Develop new ways for the schools and its students to collaborate with local businesses.
 - Business Tours
 - Experience Fairs
 - Internship Fairs
 - Student Networking Events
 - On-the-Site Trainings/Experiences

Incentives

- Develop a protocol for compensating students.
 - Stipend
 - For-Credit
 - Dual-Credit (High School/College)
 - Competency-Based Credit
- Research and inform businesses on State incentives available to provide work-based learning opportunities.

• Initiative

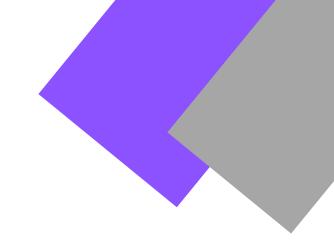
- Encourage businesses to share their stories/backgrounds.
- Encourage businesses to share their experiences collaborating with the schools.
- Develop a curriculum that requires an industryspecific senior project.

Offerings

- Create a list of what can students do for businesses (i.e. logo design, etc.).
- Create a list of how can students interact with businesses? (i.e. internships, job shadowing, etc.)

Responsibility

- Schools needs to provide all students an opportunity to engage with businesses.
- Schools need to provide businesses with a direct point of contact.
- Schools need to do more outreach/networking programs to the business community.
- Schools need to address liability questions/concerns related to on-site work-based learning.





The Work Ready Think Tank Summary Report | Fall 2021 was produced by the Town of Bristol.

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